not render all the nuances of the argument, while one following the original very closely risks being a poor representation of the source's stylistic qualities. Adamson mostly follows the latter approach: he is at times excessively literal, thereby not always doing justice to the rather idiomatic style of the original.[6]

This small reservation should not detract from the great value of Adamson's contribution. Unlike some philologists who are merely interested in textual transmission and filiation, Adamson actively engages with the object of his study and sets out some surprisingly novel insights. He does not treat *AP* mainly as a source for our knowledge of Greek literature, but as an invaluable document which illustrates the debates and concerns of Islamic intellectuals in this crucial and decisive period. *AP*, one could argue, is at the beginning of Arabic philosophy, and Adamson, by elucidating its specific contribution, takes us to the centre stage of the formation of medieval Islamic thought.

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Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen. Edited by St. John Simpson. pp. 224, 260 colour, 50 black and white illus. London, the British Museum Press, 2002.
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This exhibition catalogue charts the story of the Queen of Sheba in art and myth as a gateway to presenting archaeological and epigraphic findings about the cultural history of Yemen. Edited by St. John Simpson, it contains twelve major chapters, each written by a leading international scholar, with a total of 27 specialists in the field of ancient Yemeni studies contributing to the catalogue entries appended to each chapter. In addition to western artworks on the theme of the Queen of Sheba, c. 300 archaeological finds are described, including several South Arabian inscriptions that have been described and translated. All of these are used to illustrate the importance of the cultural history and magnificence of the South Arabian kingdoms.

The catalogue was prepared as a guide for the exhibition of the same name in the British Museum from 9 June to 13 October 2002. The artefacts in the exhibition came from the collections of several museums in Yemen and abroad, primarily the National Museum, the British Museum, and the American Foundation for the Study of Man (Falls Church, Virginia, USA), while important pieces from other Yemeni and European collections are also featured.

Yemen's Minister of Culture at the time of publication, A. al-Rowhani, wrote the foreword, which appears in English and Arabic (pp. 8–9), and the Introduction, "Yemen, the Land of the Queen of Saba'" (p. 11), was written by Yusuf M. Abdullah, Chairman of the General Organisation of Antiquities, Museums and Manuscripts, Yemen.

Chapter 1, "The Queen of Sheba in Western Popular Culture 1850–2002" by L. Llewellyn-Jones (pp. 12–30), and Chapter 2, "Legends of the Queen of Sheba" by F. A. Pennachietti (pp. 31–50), deal primarily with the figure of the Queen of Sheba in Western art and legend. Chapter 3, "Saba' and the Sabaeans" by C. Robin (pp. 51–58), is a generally solid presentation of the discovery of and evidence for the most powerful state in ancient Yemen, namely the kingdom of Saba'. An extensive political history of pre-Islamic Yemen is to be found in Chapter 4, "Kings, Kingdoms and Chronology" by R. Hoyland (pp. 67–72). Recent archaeological discoveries in Yemen from the Neolithic through the Bronze Age to the end of the second millennium BCE are summarised in Chapter 5, "Before Sheba" by C. Edens (pp. 80–85). The splendour of the kingdoms of Southern Arabia that flourished through a profitable trade in incense and other precious merchandise to the Near East and later on to the

[6] See, for instance, his translation of *ThA* VIII 56 [p. 100, 9 Badawī] on p. 97.

Roman Empire is illustrated in Chapter 6, "Trade, Incense and Perfume" by N. Groom (pp. 88–94). Agriculture and trade formed the basis of the economy in the ancient South Arabian kingdoms, as outlined in Chapter 7, "Agriculture and the Countryside" by T. J. Wilkinson (pp. 102–107), including terraced fields in the highlands and flood systems on the desert fringe.

Yemen has produced local arts and crafts that have their own characteristics while at the same time showing influences from the Mediterranean and the Persian Empire. A presentation of South Arabian art, crafts and its development was contributed by W. D. Glanzman in Chapter 8, "Arts, Crafts and Industries" (pp. 110–116). One of the most visible features of South Arabian civilisation is their monumental building. J.-F. Breton presents the architecture of houses and palaces, city walls and temples in Chapter 9, "Architecture" (pp. 142–148). Another important feature of South Arabian culture is writing. Thousands of inscriptions have been discovered documenting every aspect of the lives of the people of ancient Yemen. The earliest evidence for writing in Yemen comes from the beginning of the first millennium BCE. Chapter 10, "Languages and Writing" by F. Bron (pp. 153–156), explains the chronology of South Arabian Epigraphic. Religion and a belief in the afterlife also formed an important part of the life and culture in ancient Yemen, and this is presented in Chapter 11, "Religion" by A. Sima (pp. 161–165) and Chapter 12, "Death and Funerary Practices" by B. Vogt (pp. 180–185).

Appended to each chapter are relevant "catalogue entries", essentially providing detailed descriptions of the hundreds of objects in the *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen* exhibit. These form a major portion of the book's content, providing richly detailed information on cultural history, language, religion, agriculture, and everyday life in ancient Yemen as related to particular examples of material culture. Several of these catalogue entries form sub-chapters in their own right, including "Coins" (pp. 73–79), "Before Sabaʾ: objects from the Yemeni Bronze Age" (pp. 86–87), "Incense burners and trade goods" (pp. 95–101), "Evidence for irrigation, agriculture and wine" (pp. 108–109), "Dress and jewellery" (pp. 117–123), "Furniture and music" (pp. 124–125), "Metalwork" (pp. 126–131), "The bronze treasures from the Jabal al-Lawdh [sic, see below]" (pp. 132–133), "Vessels and containers" (pp. 134–138), "Pottery from Hajar ibn Ḥumayd" (pp. 139–141), "Architectural elements" (pp. 148–152), "Inscriptions" including a section on inscribed wooden sticks (pp. 157–160), "Cult furnishings" (pp. 166–176), "Amulets and seals" (pp. 177–179), "Grave goods" (pp. 186–190), "Funerary sculpture" (pp. 191–204), and "Wādī Ḍuraʾ" (pp. 205–207). A bibliography (pp. 210–215), a concordance of British Museum catalogue numbers compared with those of other exhibits (pp. 216–219), and index of subject and place names (pp. 220–224) are cited.

The numerous illustrations of notable sites and exhibited objects are very good, with the detailed descriptions being a highlight of the book. All inscriptions have been translated. Among the objects and artefacts depicted are incense burners, altars, bronze figurines, alabaster and limestone statues, miniature vessels, beads, funerary steles, pottery vessels, inscribed steles, inscribed bronze tablets, etc. The layout of the book, appending richly illustrated catalogue entries to their relevant chapters and sub-chapters, makes it quite friendly to both general readers and specialists.

Some artefacts from the collection of the British Museum are published for the first time in this book, such as catalogue no. 225, an "Inscribed gold bracelet" (p. 175). The inscription contains two names and reads: yṯʿrdm ṯnyt. The first word is a personal name and the second is a surname. The second word should be read as 'ṯnyt' and not 'tnym' as cited in the catalogue. This is a compound name, consisting of the theophoric element 'Yaṯiʿ', which represents a deity and means 'helper' and the verbal element 'rdm', 'to give in exchange, to replace, substitute'. This name can be translated as 'Yaṯiʿ has substituted'. However, the name yṯʿrdm is attested in old Sabaean inscriptions (see S.A. Tairan, *Die Personennamen in den altsabäischen Inschriften*. Texte und Studien zur Orientalistik 8 [Hildesheim, 1992], p. 237). The second name ̦nyt, which contains the feminine ending –t, means 'the second one'.

This name is attested in Arabic and early north Arabic as well as the form ṯny in Miniaean inscriptions (see S. Al-Said, *Die Personennamen in den minäischen Inschriften: Eine etymologische und lexikalische Studie im Bereich der semitischen Sprachen*. Veröffentlichungen der Orientalischen Kommission der Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur Mainz 41 [Wiesbaden, 1995], p. 78). However, the name yṯʿrdm is to be considered as a name of a woman.

Unfortunately, the transliteration of personal names and South Arabian words is not conventional, especially in writing the alif and the ʿain, which sometimes changes meaning. There was no chance to read proofs of some contributions, such as catalogue no. 205 (read after royal trade mark Ḏt/Ḥrnm). Attention should be given to pages 132–133, "The bronze treasures from the Jabal al-Lawdh", also referred to as Jabal al-Lawdh in the index, p. 222, and the map, p. 52, where this place name is put near Ibb. These should be changed to Jabal al-ʿAwd, the proper name for the famous site near Ibb where the discovery of a great bronze cache and several seasons of excavations by the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) have been carried out. Jabal al-Lawdh is located in the Yemeni Jawf area (see for example, H. Hitgen, "Jabal al-ʿAwd- Ein Fundplatz der Spätzeit im Hochland des Jemen", in *Im Lande der Königin von Saba: Kunstschätze aus dem antiken Jemen* [catalogue of the Yemen exhibit in Munich], edited by Staatlichen Museum für Völkerkunde München in cooperation with W. Daum, W. W. Müller, N. Nebes und W. Raunig [München, 2000], 247ff.). Figure 21 on p. 68 is not the inscription of Husn al-Ghurāb. This is part of the south gate of Timnaʿ as published in the Munich catalogue (see *Im Lande der Königin von Saba: Kunstschätze aus dem antiken Jemen*, pp. 190, 193).

Translations of inscriptions are generally based on other translations in previous Yemen exhibit catalogues, especially the Vienna catalogue (*Jemen. Kunst und Archäologie im Land der Königin von Saba'*, edited by W. Seipel, Wien, Künstlerhaus, 9 November bis 21 Februar, 1999). However, these critical notes do not detract from the great value of the work.

This well illustrated volume, a wonderfully printed catalogue from the British Museum Press, was not only a wonderful guide for the Yemen exhibit at the British Museum, but remains a very useful handbook for students, scholars and those who are interested in the ancient civilisation of Yemen.

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Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins. Edited by Herbert Berg. (Islamic History and Civilization. Studies and Texts. No. 49.) pp. xiv, 402. Leiden, Brill, 2003.
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Who could fail to be attracted by the study of "Islamic origins", the topic of this collection of twelve 'state-of-the-art' essays by leading scholars of early Islam? Judging from the list of contributors, one might conclude that archaeologists, art historians, scholars of comparative religion, and Muslim scholars find the topic of little or no interest. Archaeologists and art historians are not represented here, as far as one can tell, probably because this volume concerns exclusively approaches to the literary sources for the study of early Islam. An occasional nod is made to the formation of other religious traditions as potentially relevant yardsticks for measuring processes in early Islam, but none of the contributions offers a bird's eye view of the formation of Islam that draws on a comparative framework or on a wider account of religious movements in late antiquity. Instead, most of the contributions (with the exception of essays by John Wansbrough and Chase Robinson) cling to small bits of texts scattered in Arabic writings of a historiographical, exegetical, and legal nature. The absence of contributions from Muslim scholars remains less easily explainable. On the basis of what *is* included, the